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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8915  
INFO RUEHXS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY  
RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5011  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2450  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1809  
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 3791  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1928  
RUEHBA/AMCONSUL PERTH 0768  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 000888

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DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, DRL, DRL/AWH, DRL/IRF  
NSC FOR E. PHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/05/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KIRF](#) [PINS](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: RELIGIOUS FREEDOM -- ARRESTS MADE IN ATTACK ON  
MUSLIM SECT

REF: A. JAKARTA 846

[1](#)B. JAKARTA 823 AND PREVIOUS

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Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4 (b+d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Police have detained 12 suspects in connection with the April 27 arson attack on a mosque owned by the Ahmadiyah sect. The GOI continues to review whether to ban the sect, which was recently declared "deviant." Indonesian civil society has criticized the attacks on the sect, demanding that authorities protect its members and property. Mission continues to urge that the GOI support religious freedom. END SUMMARY.

12 DETAINED

[1](#)2. (U) Under mounting pressure to do something, police questioned 50 persons allegedly involved in the Al Furqon mosque attack, arresting 12 of them. No charges have yet been filed. In the April 27 attack, a large crowd burned down the minority Muslim sect's second-largest mosque and adjoining school in Sukabumi, West Java (ref A). The sect continues to receive vigilante threats, including minor attacks by hardline groups against its mosques in three West Java towns over the last several days. Sect members reportedly voluntarily dismantled their mosque in Ciaruteun, Bogor regency, West Java, amid threats and minor physical attacks.

GOI CONTINUES TO MULL OVER A BAN

[1](#)3. (C) The sect awaits word on whether another shoe will drop. The government at senior levels continues to review a government body's recommendation to ban the sect, after branding it deviant (ref B). Recent reports indicate that the GOI would issue a formal decree on the matter on May 5. The decision, however, was postponed and it is not clear when the GOI might take a decision.

[1](#)4. (C) There seems to be some confusion in the GOI on the

matter. Attorney General Hendarman Supanji reportedly said the draft letter to ban the group was complete and only awaiting a final review to verify constitutionality of the decision. However, Minister of Religion M. Maftuh Basyuni claimed the GOI had received no outside pressure for a quick decision and was therefore still weighing the GOI's formal response. Vice President Jusuf Kalla reportedly said the GOI could not "just drop the proposal." He also was quoted as stating, "The decision will have many religious, social, and political ramifications. We should consider them very carefully...and need to consider the legality of each option."

15. (C) Separately, a Chair of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), H. Amidhan, told DepPol/C he heard the GOI would not ban the Ahmadiyah sect, but rather "propose a plan to guide it back to the correct path." (Note: MUI is a semi-governmental body that enforces Sunni orthodox Islam in Indonesia.) Amidhan worries hardliners will reject this plan. He added that Ahmadiyah began with just 13 branches and had now mushroomed to over 200 branches and that its "heretical philosophy" could not be ignored. (Note: Ahmadiyah has grown, but the number of members is not clear.)

#### STANDING UP FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

16. (U) Some Indonesians are standing up for the Ahmadiyahs. On April 29, a coalition of civil society groups, including the Wahid Institute (founded by former President Abdurrahman Wahid), the Jakarta Legal Aid Institute, and the Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence (Kontras), held a joint press conference demanding that the President not sign a decree outlawing the sect, asserting that any such move would be a violation of the Indonesian Constitution. They also said the decision would result in greater violence against the Ahmadiyah community. Some student groups have

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also condemned attempts to pressure the Ahmadiyah.

#### GOI LIKELY TO EQUIVOCATE

17. (C) The GOI is under pressure from Islamic groups to ban the group. At the same time, civil society and many other Indonesians are coming out against any such action. Given this situation, the government will probably choose to continue to sit on any formal ruling on banning the group. The news regarding the arrests is positive, indicating perhaps that the government plans to actively work on protecting the Ahmadiyah (something it so far has not effectively done). Mission continues to urge that the GOI support religious freedom.

HUME